

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 4262

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS, 12-31-79

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR PRESS AND PUBLIC

REF: A) USNATO 3829; B) STATE 177080

1. AT PERMREPS LUNCH SEPTEMBER 11, DUTCH CHARGE BUWALDA BROACHED SUBJECT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION POLICY REGARDING MBFR. HE REPORTED THAT THE NETHERLANDS GOVERNMENT PLANS TO INTRODUCE ITS BUDGET NEXT WEEK AND FEELS OBLIGED TO MAKE SOME ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT THE FIRST STAGE OF MBFR REDUCTIONS WILL AFFECT ONLY U.S. AND SOVIET FORCES.

2. BUWALDA SAID THE GON BELIEVES SUCH AN ANNOUNCEMENT CAN NO LONGER BE POSTPONED, BECAUSE OF PRESS QUOTATIONS BY FRG MOD LEBER IN DIE WELT AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY DR. KISSINGER.

3. I EXPRESSED SURPRISE AND CONCERN ABOUT PIECEMEAL PUBLIC RELEASES OF MBFR INFORMATION, SAYING MBFR IS A COMPLEX NEGOTIATION WITH IMPORTANT PUBLIC RELATIONS IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR PUBLICS. I DID NOT PERSONALLY KNOW WHAT THE PROPER CONFIDENTIAL

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PRESS POLICY WOULD BE AND I HAD NO GUIDANCE ON THE MATTER, BUT THERE WERE OBVIOUSLY A VARIETY OF WAYS TO HANDLE IT. THE ALLIES COULD INDIVIDUALLY DRIBBLE OUT INFORMATION AS THEY SAW FIT; ALLIES COULD ALL MAKE PRESS STATEMENTS ON PARTICULAR

ASPECTS AT ONE TIME; ALLIES COULD APPOINT A SINGLE PRESS
SPOKESMAN FOR THE ALLIANCE; OR ALLIES COULD JUST LET NATURE
- LEAKS - TAKE THEIR COURSE. I CONTINUED THAT IT SEEMED WRONG
TO ME TO BACK INTO ONE OF THESE OPTIONS WITHOUT HAVING THOUGHT
IT THROUGH AND DISCUSSED IT.

4. BUWALDA REPLIED THAT HE WOULD REPORT THESE VIEWS, BUT HE
COULD NOT GUARANTEE THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD REFRAIN
FROM MAKING AN ANNOUNCEMENT. FRG, UK, CANADIAN, LUXEMBOURG,
GREEK AND BELGIAN PERMREPS AND LUS THEN ALL EXPRESSED CON-
CERN ABOUT THE NETHERLANDS PLAN AND STATED THAT PRESS POLICY
WAS SOMETHING THE ALLIANCE SHOULD DISCUSS AND CONSIDER.

5. SYG LUNS SAID THAT HE WAS FAMILIAR WITH THIS SORT OF
PROBLEM AND HE FELT SURE THAT IF BUWALDA INVESTED A FEW
FRANCS IN A TELEPHONE CALL, HE COULD GET HIS GOVERNMENT TO
POSTPONE A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT.

6. COMMENT: THIS DISCUSSION UNDERLINES THE NEED FOR A POLICY.
SEE REF A. END COMMENT. RUMSFELD

CONFIDENTIAL

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